

1. An apparatus for distributing a unit of information representative of a copyrightable work over a network, said apparatus comprising:

a gateway computer adapted for storing said units of encrypted information representative of copyrightable works;

5 a desktop computer, connected to said gateway component via said network, including a computer system, associated memory, and user desktop software, said desktop software being adapted to encrypt using a symmetric key and send said encrypted unit of information to said gateway computer and said desktop software being adapted to encrypt, using a first asymmetric key associated with a user, a ticket comprising said symmetric key;

10 said first asymmetric key of said user being associated with a second asymmetric key of said user, wherein data encrypted using said first asymmetric key can be decrypted using said second asymmetric key.